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during the summer vacation. Many of them took up the habit to kill time while engaged either as caddies at the golf clubs during the waits between service, or as ushers at Ravinia Park during the intervals between concerts. Probably one-third of the boys who fail in school owe their lack of success directly to this vice. Most of the boys smoke cigarettes. Those who have had the habit a long time smoke pipes. The boys are not made sick by the tobacco; but all acknowledge that it is harmful.

In seeking reasons why high-school boys so frequently fail in their work and why they drop out of school in such large numbers, school men have probably not given sufficient consideration to the extent and evil of the use of tobacco among students. During the period of growth when there is often a general break-up of the nervous and physical organization of adolescents, and when the heart is so often irregular in its action, the use of tobacco is particularly injurious. Its baneful effects are immediately apparent in loss of mental, moral, and physical tone. By it the boy is unfitted to succeed either at work or at play. He becomes discouraged and drops out of school.

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OVIEDO AND UNIVERSITY EXTENSION¹

The little University of Oviedo, although established by Phillip III as far back as the year 1604, has not grown rapidly in three hundred years. It has not more than three hundred students in regular attendance, and its faculty of twenty or thirty teachers do all their work in one modest structure less than two hundred feet square. The institution has an annual income of less than \$13,000, and is by no means the most prosperous of the generally somewhat neglected chain of Spanish universities. But this struggling little school has for years kept in operation an original and very successful system of university extension. If the enterprise had been carried on in any other part of the world than Spain it would have enjoyed a generous amount of advertising; as it is, the news of it which the Oviedo professor, Dr. Altamira, brought to this country in the course of his visit in 1910 was news indeed.

It is not easy to give statistical information about this movement or to study its method of operation; in fact, it seems delightfully free from method. This comment is not intended for sarcasm; opportunism sometimes has its decided advantages. Started in 1898, the movement has never involved any attempt to work toward diplomas or degrees, or to keep any sort of record of the progress of the students. The enterprise has never received a peseta of help from either the institution or the state. And most unique feature of all, the subjects of the courses are chosen, not by the teachers, but by the students.

¹ *La Extension Universitaria*. Par RAFAEL ALTAMIRA. Universidad de la Habana: Revista de la Facultad de Letras y Ciencias, Mayo de 1912.

To elucidate this most startling phase of procedure, first it is necessary to explain that the general lectures which form the principal part of the extension work are planned early in October, as a result of a popular mass-meeting at which all who care to attend come together for a free-for-all discussion. The professors in charge of the work note the opinions expressed, and the printed program of lectures which appears a few days later is always found to have taken careful account of these requests.

Part of the general lectures are delivered in the university auditorium and part at the headquarters of various workingmen's clubs in the city of Oviedo; for this movement is one which is intended especially for the help of the workingmen, although Dr. Altamira boasts that at the general lectures all strata of society, both sexes, and all ages are invariably represented. They are all absolutely free, which is another very pleasant feature of the undertaking.

Besides these regularly planned and posted series at home, lectures are delivered in neighboring cities, Gijon, Santander, Bilbao, where audiences of miners and industrial employees are addressed, and even in large villages where the hearers are principally agricultural laborers. These away-from-home series are even more haphazard, so to speak, than those at home. At the end of the week the extension faculty—made up of regular professors from the University, public-school teachers and professional men of Oviedo, and of advanced University students—assembles in the University faculty-room and talks over plans for the coming week. This city has called for a particular speaker whom they had before and liked. This village wants such a subject discussed by anyone who is free and competent. And so a plan is pieced together for the week. The person or organization—in most cases, apparently a workingmen's society—applying for the speaker is supposed to pay his expenses, it being understood that he travels third class, that is, in the cheapest possible fashion. But many cases have arisen where lectures were called for and no funds were forthcoming to pay even the necessary expenses of the lecturers. No applications have ever been refused for financial reasons. In a few cases the lecturer has paid the bill himself; generally, business men of Oviedo have supplied the funds.

The themes discussed in these general addresses are varied, but it appears that for the most part they are rather of a literary or cultural character than attempts at imparting practical instruction. Dr. Altamira mentions series on the *Odyssey*, on Shakespeare, and on Rousseau as especially popular and successful. At all lectures the audience is given entire liberty to ask questions, not merely at the conclusion but at any time during the progress of the discussion, and advantage is very freely taken of this permission.

Besides the general addresses, there are special courses of several kinds. A particular effort has been made to teach the workingmen to read the masterpieces of literature, and with this end in view the men who are interested have been divided into groups of five to ten, who listen, question, and discuss as an extension professor reads. It is beyond question that a large fraction

of the population of every country who can write their names and spell out the headlines of a newspaper are absolutely unable to read in the true sense of the word. These Oviedo professors have been able to help some men and women of this class to understand the purpose of a dictionary, to develop in a small degree the power of abstraction, and to catch at least a hint of the charm of imaginative literature.

At first there was no thought of children in the courses. But when a class of laborers was driven to protest because a group of little girls insisted on coming in and embarrassing them by visibly following the subject-matter of their course better than they themselves were doing, another professor was detailed to take the little girls separately; and now there are separate series of lectures for children, and others for women.

The Spaniard is not a marvel of patience and perseverance; and when, with this fact in mind, we learn that the attendance at these courses has grown from a hundred or two the first year to twelve or fifteen hundred in 1909-10, it seems clear that the lectures are accomplishing something of substantial good. It is true that in the sense which the English universities have given the phrase, what is being done at Oviedo is not university extension at all; but it is possible that these lectures and classes are bringing some starved souls quite as valuable aid as an A.B. or a diploma. There is something pathetic as well as inspiring in the thought of these poorly paid upholders of the torch of learning in an illiterate country and their sturdy effort to spread the light beyond the walls of their own little institution; and it is comforting to know that the effort is being crowned with success.

ROY TEMPLE HOUSE

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HOME SCHOOLS

Scattered here and there in the public-school system of America are schools bearing a new message in education. These are known as "home schools," and may be looked upon as the most hopeful spots in modern secondary education for girls.

That a more intelligent supervision and care of the home is necessary in America is recognized by all most closely in touch with our present social conditions. The weaknesses and dangers of our civilization may be traced to the home, or, more hopefully expressed, the remedy for the weaknesses and dangers of our social and industrial structure lies in the home. Far-sighted settlement workers have been putting forth effort along this line for many years, but it is only within the past few months, one might almost say, that this responsibility has been recognized by the public schools. The enlargement of the functions of the public schools goes on with such amazing rapidity that the "visions" of superintendents, principals, and teachers become facts almost before the public has recognized the presence of a new demand and a new responsibility. So it is not surprising that in a night, as